



EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS

PRESS RELEASE

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ECA issues a follow-up to its Special Report No 1/2005 on the management of the European Anti-Fraud Office

The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) is charged with fighting fraud and other illegal activities detrimental to the EU budget. OLAF is part of the European Commission, has investigative autonomy, employs about 500 staff, and its annual expenditure amounts to some 50 million euro. In 2005, the European Court of Auditors' (ECA) Special Report No 1/2005 on the management of OLAF made 17 recommendations to refocus activities on the investigative function, improve efficiency and demonstrate effectiveness.

The European Court of Auditors' follow-up audit of 2011 (Special Report no 2/2011) set out to establish the action taken to implement the recommendations of Special Report No 1/2005. It addressed the questions of whether the activities of OLAF have been refocused on its investigative function, whether OLAF improved the efficiency of its investigations, how OLAF demonstrates the effectiveness of its investigations, and whether the role of the Supervisory Committee has been clarified.

The audit concluded that from the recommendations of the 2005 report, three of the recommendations had not been accepted, two recommendations were implemented, while the remaining twelve recommendations were implemented to varying degrees. The Court reiterated that its previous recommendations remain to a large extent valid and efforts should continue to ensure their full implementation.

The Court made a series of new recommendations in its follow-up report to enhance the performance of OLAF. Among them was that OLAF should increase the number and speed of investigations by increasing the proportion of time spent on its core investigative function, and that the contribution the intelligence units make to investigative work should be enhanced. In order to improve planning and supervision so that investigations are implemented in a timely and efficient manner, the Commission should simplify and consolidate anti-fraud legislation, while OLAF should strengthen its cooperation and partnership with Eurojust.

Full details of the audit may be found in the text of the special report available in print and on-line at: www.eca.europa.eu

note: The purpose of this press release is to give a summary of the special report adopted by the Court of Auditors which is available on the Court's Internet site (www.eca.europa.eu) and is also published in a printed format available from the Court.

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